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FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 4193
INFO RUEHZS/ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 4025
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 0619
RUEHDO/AMEMBASSY DOHA 0078
RUEHPB/AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY 3333
RUEHSA/AMEMBASSY PRETORIA 0252
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 0449
RUEHWL/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON 1440
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 0593
RHHJJPI/USPACOM HONOLULU HI
RUEHUNV/USMISSION UNVIE VIENNA 0106

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 03 JAKARTA 000972

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/03/2017

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [UNSC](#) [IR](#) [ID](#)

SUBJECT: HEAT STILL ON PRESIDENT YUDHOYONO FOLLOWING IRAN
VOTE

REF: A. JAKARTA 930 (FM GRILLED OVER IRAN VOTE)

[1](#)B. JAKARTA 271 (GRIM PICTURE OF PRESIDENCY)

[1](#)C. 06 JAKARTA 5703 (IRAN ENGAGES DPR)

[1](#)D. 06 JAKARTA 1176 (INDONESIA'S DPR)

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Classified By: CDA John A. Heffern, for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

SUMMARY

[1](#)1. (C) A number of members of the Indonesian House of Representatives (DPR) from across party lines, including the Speaker himself, continued their vocal assault on Indonesia's decision to vote for UNSCR 1747. Despite the heated rhetoric and highly public critique of the administration's decision, a parliamentary move to summon the President or a member of his cabinet to explain the vote before a DPR plenary session appeared increasingly unlikely. In the event the DPR maneuver moved forward and the administration was required to formally explain the vote, the President signaled that he would dispatch Foreign Minister Wirajuda to reprise the explanation he gave the DPR's Commission on Foreign Affairs and Defense issues last week (Ref A).

[1](#)2. (S) The DPR's public posturing on the issue appeared to reflect a general undercurrent of dissatisfaction with the vote among the Indonesian people, as well as a complete lack of understanding about what the vote actually meant. Where some parliamentarians saw an opportunity to score quick political points at the President's expense, others may also have been influenced by Iranian lobbying. A member of DPR Chairman Agung Laksono's staff told us that the Iranian government reportedly promised Chairman Laksono and several party faction leaders in the DPR unspecified oil concessions in exchange for their efforts to pressure the Indonesian government to "support the development of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes in Iran." According to the contact, these members feared Indonesia's vote on UNSCR 1747 jeopardized this deal, and had launched their attacks on the President in an effort to appease Tehran and salvage the arrangement. End Summary.

PARLIAMENTARY MOVE FOR INTERPELLATION

¶3. (C) On March 29 a group of over 200 parliamentarians from all the major political parties except the President's own Democratic Party endorsed a motion to formally query the administration's UNSCR vote. If called to explain, the President would be required either to explain the vote before a plenary session himself, or designate someone from his cabinet to do so in his stead. State Secretary Yusril Mahendra publicly stated the President intended to send Foreign Minister Wirajuda to explain the vote if it got to that point.

¶4. (C) Our contacts in the DPR told us the Parliament did not appear likely to call for interpellation, though nothing was certain yet. All that would be required of the administration at that point would be an official explanation of the vote before a plenary session, an explanation similar to the one Foreign Minister Wirajuda already provided to the DPR's Commission of Foreign Affairs and Defense matters, Commission I, last week. Most of our contacts saw little downside to interpellation and doubted that it would have any long term impact.

CONTINUING CLAMOR IN THE DPR

¶5. (C) Ref A outlined the hostile reception that greeted Foreign Minister Wirajuda during his appearance before Commission I last week. Many of the same parliamentarians who attacked Wirajuda have continued their assault in the media in the ensuing days. Coverage of the issue in the media dropped off slightly each day following vote, but for the most part it remained a front page story and the majority of the public statements from DPR members framed the vote as "anti-Islam" or "pro-American." Trisanti Mitayani, a

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Commission I legislator from the National Mandate party (PAN), summed up the general tenor of the public remarks when she told the media that "the government has to explain why, as a Muslim majority country, we haven't supported Iran." Only legislators from the President's own party defended the vote in public.

POSSIBLE IRANIAN FINGERPRINTS ON DPR OUTCRY

¶6. (S) Arief Budiman (please protect), a member of Chairman Laksono's staff, told us with little apparent embarrassment that Chairman Laksono made a "gentleman's agreement" with the Iranian government during Iranian President Ahmadi-Nejad's visit to Indonesia in May of 2006 (Ref C). According to Arief, Laksono, a long time Iran sympathizer, agreed to support Iran's peaceful pursuit of nuclear energy and pressure the government to do the same and has received promises of unspecified oil concessions at an undefined date in the future. Arief told us that Laksono never believed Indonesia would actually vote for the resolution and assumed Russian or Chinese opposition would allow Indonesia to avoid taking a stand. The Speaker was devastated by the vote, Arief said, and felt that he would need to actively criticize the President in order to salvage his deal with Iran. When we pointed out that support for UNSCR 1747 would not actually constitute a violation of the "gentleman's agreement" as UNSCR 1747 did not deny Iran the right to pursue nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, Arief agreed, but noted that Iran would not see it that way. Arief told us that attacking Yudhoyono on the issue - and likely damaging his prospects as a possible Vice Presidential candidate in the process - made Laksono as stressed and unhappy as Arief had ever seen him.

¶7. (S) According to Arief, the Iranian government made similarly vague business arrangements with the faction heads of each of the seven largest parties in the DPR. In each

instance, the Iranians failed to articulate the specifics of the deal, but guaranteed that Iran would grant oil concessions in some form at a later date in exchange for fealty to Iran's pursuit of a nuclear program for "peaceful purposes." Arief told us that when Indonesia voted for the resolution, each of the affected legislators became enraged, fearing the vote would jeopardize very lucrative business opportunities for them. According to Arief, shortly after the vote they conferred and agreed that by aggressively attacking the administration's vote they might be able to win their way back into Iran's good graces and salvage their business deals.

GOLKAR DIVIDED

18. (S) Dadan Irawan, a Transportation Secretary with Golkar, the largest party in Indonesia, told us that the interpellation issue exposed the deep fissures in the party that separated the faction controlled by Vice President Kalla on one hand, and the Chairman Laksono loyalists on the other. According to Dadan, VP Kalla's efforts to rein in Laksono's faction and present a unified Golkar position in support of the President on the Iran vote had been stymied by Laksono. Laksono sought to leverage the issue to pressure President Yudhoyono to appoint members from within his own faction of Golkar to cabinet positions during an eventual cabinet reshuffle (Ref B). Dadan was not, however, able to comment on whether Iranian business arrangements might have also strengthened Laksono's opposition to the UNSCR vote. Dadan told us there was virtually no prospect that the two camps within Golkar would reach agreement on the issue. Golkar's faction chairman in the DPR, Andi Mattalata, concurred with this assessment, stating publicly that Golkar would not seek consensus on the issue.

IRAN WORKS TO INFLUENCE PUBLIC OPINION

19. (C) The Iranians Embassy have been engaged in a long-standing and ongoing campaign to garner the support of Indonesia's Muslim leaders for its nuclear program. In

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advance of the vote, leaders of Indonesia's two largest mass Muslim organizations, Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah, received multiple visits from Iranian officials and publicly expressed support for the Iranian position. After the UNSC vote, they slammed the Indonesian government. The loudest and most frequent critic has been NU's Hasyim Muzadi, who charged that "if war breaks out eventually between Iran and the US, the Indonesian government will be responsible." According to Muzadi, Indonesia's vote also caused many ulama from around the Muslim world to boycott a Sunni-Shi'a dialogue currently underway in Indonesia (NU's Vice Chairman disputes this, telling the press that many of the ulama had already committed to attending an Al-Azhar alumni meeting on April 2-3 in Cairo and another meeting of Iranian clerics on April 6-7).

110. (c) Although less strident, Muhammadiyah Chairman Din Syamsuddin has also criticized the vote, saying that "if we want to be consistent, Indonesia should also press for sanctions against all countries that have a nuclear program, including Israel and the United States." Even former President and one-time head of NU Abdurrahman Wahid accused the GOI of being "George Bush's henchman," although he later backed away somewhat from his initial negative stance. Not surprisingly, the Muslim hard-liners have been even more vitriolic. The Muslim Defenders Team, a group of attorneys led by Abu Bakar Ba'asyir's lawyer, went so far as to initiate a lawsuit against SBY, saying that "this lawsuit is a message from the ulama circle that they do not agree with the government's decision to support the resolution."

111. (C) The Iranian embassy has redoubled its efforts to

reach out to Muslim organizations, meeting leaders like Muhammadiyah's Syamsuddin just days after the vote. Hery Haryianto, the head of NU's student wing, told us that the Iranian ambassador visited him shortly thereafter to seek NU's support. Haryianto said that the ambassador portrayed the Iranians as victims who were fearful of an imminent U.S. military attack. While Haryianto did not express a personal view on the Iranians' position, he did say that Indonesian civil society is sympathetic to the Iranians.

COMMENT

¶12. (C) The DPR has demonstrated that it can make life uncomfortable for the President on foreign policy decisions even if the only real legal tool at its disposal - interpellation - is largely symbolic. For a President averse to confrontation, we have so far been impressed SBY has not walked back from the vote. Although falling under the category of "too little, too late," several key presidential advisors have issued strong statements explaining Indonesia's position on Iran in recent days. Nevertheless, the painful public reaction to the vote will likely color how SBY approaches Indonesia's voting on the UNSC throughout the rest of its tenure.

HEFFERN